ASSASSINATION COMM JOHNSON, LYNDON B

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February 24, 1964

Not sent

The President
The White House
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

You will remember my reluctance to serve on the President's Commission to Investigate the Assassination of President John F. Kennedy. I told you at the time that the pressure of other duties was so great that I did not see how I could possibly give the work of this Commission the time and effort that its importance demanded. I explained to you my onerous committee responsibilities, including the chairmanship of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Subcommittee on Defense Appropriations, as well as membership on several other Appropriations subcommittees, on the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and the Aeronautical and Space Sciences Committee, and that, in addition, I was charged with special responsibilities in connection with highly controversial legislation that will be considered at this Session of the Congress.

Since my appointment, I have given as much time to the work of the Commission as was possible for me to do in the pressure of other duties. Though at times I have felt I was a part-time member, I did manage to attend the organizational meetings and to hear some of the testimony of the first two witnesses who testified.

In my experience as a trial lawyer many years ago, I found it was possible to evaluate testimony from the written page much better if one had had an opportunity to personally hear and observe the witness testify.

I had hoped to hear part of the testimony of the last witness (Robert Oswald). However, perhaps due to the fact that I had not been regular in my attendance at the meetings of the Commission, I have only been notified intermittently as to the

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Commission meetings. Having noted in the morning paper on Saturday, February 22nd, that the Commission would be meeting, I came to my office expecting to attend the meeting to hear the last of this witness' testimony. Inquiry of my staff developed the fact that I had no notice of the meeting.

I then requested Mr. W. H. Jordan, Jr. of my staff to ascertain whether the Commission was in session and he reported to me that all efforts to reach the Commission by telephone were futile and it was, therefore, assumed that the Commission was not in session. It later developed that the Commission was in session and had received testimony from the witness, Robert Oswald, for several hours.

I hope I do not appear captious, but I do not think it reasonable to expect anyone to serve on any commission that does not notify all its members definitely as to the time of the meetings of the group and as to the identify of the witness that will appear. It will be impossible for me to attend all of the meetings but, in the absence of such notices, I cannot possibly allocate my working hours in such a way as to most effectively devote the time available to me. I had hoped to be able to arrange my legislative responsibilities so as to at least see and hear briefly each material witness before the Commission. This is not the first time that there has been confusion as to notices of the meetings of the Commission.

In view of these circumstances and the further fact that I cannot possibly attend a majority of the sessions of the Commission and discharge my legislative duties, I feel constrained to request you to accept my resignation and relieve me of this assignment.

Please be assured of my desire to serve you, your administration and our country in every possible way. In this specific instance, I do not feel that the circumstances will permit me to perform the important duties of membership on this Commission as thoroughly as I should like.

With assurances of respect and esteem, I am

Sincerely,

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